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# INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

## United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION  
FEBRUARY 2, 1938 (WEDNESDAY)

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE MARKET BASKET

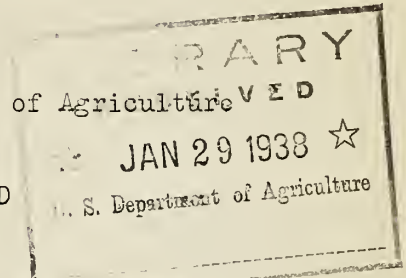
by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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RICE--THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD

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Rice is one of the international foods for which people have developed strong national tastes. Pick up the cook book of almost any country and you will find rice dishes seasoned and savored to suit the natives of that particular part of the world.

One of the favored Italian recipes is for risotto, rice flavored with onions, cheese and butter. Cooks of India season rice with the highly spiced curry powder. And in Oriental countries a sauce made from soybeans often lends savor to the daily rice.

Cooks of Java are famed for their rice tafel, a central dish of rice eaten with many different seasonings. And the popularity of the Spanish combination of rice and tomatoes livened up with onion, peppers, and bacon has spread far beyond the boundaries of that country.

In our own country styles of rice cookery originated in the Carolinas and Georgia. There it was that rice first grew successfully in the United States. And as the industry grew, and the whole nation was supplied with rice, cooks the country over adopted and adapted the dishes of these Carolinian homemakers.

This year, American rice cooks have ample material to work with. The supply of rice in the United States this season is the largest on record. The four producing states are Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and California.



In some countries where rice is served every day they judge the skill of a housewife by the way she cooks this cereal. If she is a topnotcher each kernel keeps its form after it is done.

And that is an accomplishment useful to a cook in any country. We like rice that's fluffy and not sticky. The chief trick to getting rice like this is to cook it slowly, in an uncovered pan using lots of boiling water.

Wash the rice first in hot water. Then sprinkle it in rapidly boiling water and for each cup of rice allow two quarts of water and two teaspoons salt.

When rice starts to cook, lower the heat. This will allow the rice to boil gently so that the kernels won't break up. But see that the water doesn't get below boiling. If that happens the rice will absorb so much water it will become sticky.

Keep the rice boiling in an uncovered pan. Run a fork through it lightly once in a while, but do not stir it with a spoon because that breaks the kernels.

Rice cooks tender in from 15 to 25 minutes. To test for doneness pick up one or two grains on a fork. Press these between the thumb and finger to see that they are tender all the way through and have no hard centers.

Then drain the rice at once, in a colander. Pour hot water through it. This will remove the loose starch and separate the grains. Cover the rice with a cloth and set over hot water or in a warm oven for the grains to swell.

If you start with a cup of uncooked rice, you will have between three and four cups of fluffy boiled rice depending upon the variety you use.

In some parts of the country rice takes on a grayish or greenish cast during boiling. This is caused by alkali in the water. You may take care of this by adding just a pinch of cream of tartar to the cooking water.

Boiled rice is good served by itself with butter, or the top of the fluffy pile of it dusted with scarlet paprika. Plain boiled rice is a standard dish in the South where it is always served in a meal when there is a meat gravy.



Left over boiled rice may be heated again by simply putting it over hot water in a colander and steaming until the rice is hot through. Or it may be used cold in waffles, pancakes, muffins, fritters, or in an omelet. Seasoned with onion, parsley, celery, and fat it makes a stuffing for meat or fowl. Cheese or creole sauces are good with rice also.

For some dishes, it's better to have a more moist cooked rice. To get this, cook the rice in a double boiler or a waterless cooker. For this slower cooking you'll need only about two cups of salted water to each cup of rice. When the rice has cooked tender, drain it but do not rinse it.

This moist cooked rice is more easily molded in a rice ring, or pressed into rice patties to brown and serve with creamed meat, fish, mushrooms, or mixed vegetables.

One favorite use of rice in many countries is in making soups. Here rice already cooked may be added to the soup. But rice cooked in the soup stock has a more savory flavor. Use about 3 tablespoons of rice to one quart of soup. Simmer the rice for half an hour in a covered pan.

Rice cooked in milk has a higher food value than rice cooked in water. And the slow cooking in milk gives it a pleasing, delicate flavor. One cupful of rice cooked in a double boiler will take up four or five cupfuls of milk.

This "creamy rice" makes a good breakfast cereal or a dessert, and you may mold it and chill to serve as a compote with fruits for dessert.

There are many good reasons for rice's international popularity. Everyone knows rice is an inexpensive source of energy. It is adaptable. And its bland flavor combines well with other foods to make them go further. It goes into all kinds of dishes--from soups to dessert.





For many years plant breeders have been developing varieties of rice that are suitable to conditions in the United States. Seven of these leading varieties the Bureau of Home Economics has tested for cooking quality.

Samples of each variety were boiled by an established method. Then each one was noted for how well the grains held their shape--and if the rice was sticky or not.

Judged in this way the rice varieties ranked for cooking quality as follows: Rexoro, Fortuna, Blue Rose, Caloro, Edith, Lady Wright, and Early Prolific. Caloro is a short-grain rice. Blue Rose and Early Prolific are the medium-grain varieties. And the other four varieties have longer kernels.

Cooking tests also show that different varieties of rice require different times to cook tender. Rexoro, the top-ranking long-grain variety, cooked done in sixteen minutes. But it took another long-grain one, Fortuna, about twenty minutes or more to cook tender.

With these differences in cooking time and table quality it is obvious that whenever possible the varieties of rice should be kept separate.

Brown rice is rice from which only the husk has been removed. It has a higher food value than the more highly milled white rice because the bran and germ portions are still on. This part makes it a good source of iron and phosphorus. Brown rice is also a good source of vitamins B and G.

Brown rice does not keep so well as polished rice because of the fat in the germ. It is cooked for the most part just as polished rice. But it takes longer to cook tender. After the first thirty minutes of boiling, cover the pan and simmer the rice until it is cooked through and all the water is absorbed.

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## United States Department of Agriculture

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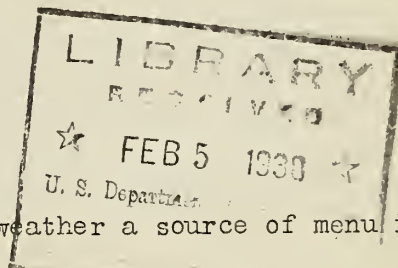
WASHINGTON, D. C.

### THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

### PUDDING DESSERTS



Many a successful meal planner finds the weather a source of menu inspiration. Hot summer days call for lighter foods and frozen desserts. Fresh greens predominate in spring meals. And it's during the cold days of midwinter that stuffings and puddings taste best.

Puddings, especially the ones served hot, are among the most filling of all desserts. But in this respect as well as in other ways there is considerable difference among the relatives of the pudding family.

There seems to be little in common between the spicy plum pudding and the unpretending bread pudding — or between blanc mange and up-side-down cake. But the family resemblance shows up clearly in one feature. They are all bound together by some kind of cereal product.

The binding material in some puddings is a batter. Plum puddings and other batters with fruit incorporated, either steamed or baked, belong in this class. So do cottage puddings, which are plain cake served with a fruit or other kind of sauce. Up-side-down cakes are batter and fruit combined in a novel way.

Other puddings are mixtures of soft consistency held together by a starchy substance such as rice, tapioca, oatmeal, flour, or cornstarch. These are cooked on top of the stove or in an oven.



Both a cereal and a custard base hold other puddings together. Some rice and tapioca puddings, and the bread puddings are in this class. And the fruit and bread crumb combinations such as the apple betty seem to have a branch of the pudding family tree to themselves.

One of the best known of all puddings is the plum pudding. This blend of spices, nuts, and fruit can trace its ancestry back to the days of early England. It is especially associated with the Christmas season. But after holidays are over and the menu has settled back to budget meals we often appreciate plum puddings more.

### Steamed Puddings

Similar to plum puddings, but easier and quicker to make are the steamed puddings with a butter cake foundation. Chopped dried apricots, cranberries, or other fruit are mixed with two tablespoons or so of flour and added right at the last.

Put this mixture into a greased mold with room for the pudding to expand as it steams. Cover the mold lightly so the moisture that condenses on the steamer lid will not fall into the pudding.

Such puddings take about two hours to steam. They are served hot with a sauce and can not be kept over the way a plum pudding is.

Up-side-down cakes are special favorites with men. They are baked in a skillet or a thick pan with a sirup and fruit mixture on the bottom, a cake batter over all. Then when this is turned out the cake on the bottom is topped with the sirupy sauce.

To get this out of the pan with the sirup and cake in their respective places, loosen the sides of the cake with a knife. Then invert a plate over the skillet. Holding skillet and plate together, turn them upside down.





Putting in plenty of butter and fruit juice to make the sirup will also make the cake come out easier. The oven temperature is very moderate (about 300 to 325 degrees Fahrenheit).

Puddings made on top of the stove and held together with some kind of starch should be cooked in a double boiler. A thick starch and milk mixture cooked directly over the flame may stick to the pan and scorch. When adding the starch to the pudding, combine it with the sugar to separate the starch grains. Then add the milk, preferably hot to speed up cooking.

Stir the pudding constantly until it thickens, to avoid lumps. If you want to quicken the cooking time, start the pudding over direct heat. But after it thickens, put it into a double boiler to cook for about twenty more minutes.

The additional time is needed to get the starch completely cooked and so that it will lose its raw taste. Keep the lid on the double boiler so that a skin will not form on top of the pudding. If a skin does form, beat the pudding with a Dover egg beater.

#### Using Eggs in Puddings

If eggs are used in this pudding combine them with the mixture after the starch has thoroughly cooked. After the eggs are added the pudding should not cook over two or three minutes longer.

To combine the eggs, add some of the hot mixture gradually to the eggs. If the eggs are added directly to the hot pudding without this preliminary step they will harden immediately and make the pudding streaky.

An especially delicious creamy rice pudding is one of rice cooked in a slow oven with milk. This must be stirred every fifteen minutes or so for uniform thickening and to spread the delicate caramel flavor throughout the pudding.

Many puddings are made with a custard base. In these of course the rules for custards must be observed. Custards are always cooked at a moderate temperature to keep them from shrinking and becoming watery. Custards cooked overlong also will curdle.





Bread puddings, and some rice and tapioca puddings are made with a milk and egg base. They are treated just as baked custards -- baked in a moderate oven in a pan of water that never gets to boiling. And these like all custards, should be removed from the hot water just as soon as they are set.

The dryness of the bread can make a lot of difference in a bread pudding. Very dry bread absorbs much more liquid than bread only a few days old or that toasted especially for the pudding. Bread for puddings is never in very tiny crumbs. Usually it is in cubes.

#### Some Puddings Need Sauce

Some puddings are complete in themselves. But others taste best served with a sauce. With steaming hot plum pudding, hard sauce made from butter, powdered sugar, and flavoring is perfect. Or a liquid foamy sauce is suitable.

Bread or rice puddings are good with cream or a maple sauce. Plain or whipped cream often tops the cornstarch mixtures. It's all a matter of your own favorite combination of flavors.

#### Steamed Apricot Pudding

1/2 pound dried apricots	2 eggs
1-1/2 cups sifted soft-wheat flour	2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 cup butter or other fat	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sugar	1/2 cup milk

Wash the apricots, chop fine, and mix with 2 tablespoons of the flour. Sift the remaining flour with the baking powder and salt. Cream the fat, add the sugar, and well-beaten eggs, and add alternately with the milk to the sifted dry ingredients. Stir in the apricots. Pour into a greased mold, cover, and steam for 2 hours. Serve hot with hard sauce.

#### Butterscotch Pudding

3/4 cup flour	1/2 teaspoon salt
3 cups milk	2 or 3 eggs
1-1/2 cups brown sugar	1/2 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons butter	

Blend the flour and 1 cup of the cold milk until smooth. Heat the remaining milk in a double boiler, pour some of the hot milk into the flour and milk, return the mixture to the double boiler, stir until thickened, cover, and cook for 15 minutes. Meantime, cook the brown sugar, butter, and salt for 5 minutes over direct heat and stir constantly. Add while hot to the mixture in the double boiler, beat well, gradually stir this mixture into the beaten eggs, return to the double boiler, cook for a few minutes, remove from the fire, add the vanilla, and chill. Serve with plain or whipped cream.



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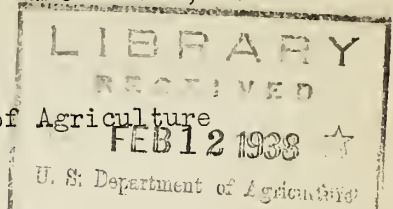
**United States Department of Agriculture**

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THE MARKET BASKET  
by  
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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WASHINGTON, D. C.



Good weather generally isn't news. If the sun shines and the temperature's moderate we take it for granted. It's only when the blizzards, nor'easters, hurricanes, and sleet storms swoop down that winter weather makes headlines.

But this winter fairly continuous good weather in many places has brought and is still bringing good news to food markets. Right now the big food weather news concerns the states that produce fresh vegetables, strawberries, and citrus fruits for the whole nation during the wintertime.

So far this winter most of these states have been free from weather catastrophes. Texas had an early freeze in November and since then has had a season more moist than usual. Florida has had three freezes which set back the snap bean crop considerably and delayed the marketing of some other vegetables. But aside from this the weather in the states that produce our early vegetables has been rather favorable. This makes good news for the shopper as well as the producer.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are rated high by nutritionists. They are "protective foods" because they contain essential vitamins and minerals that we do not get in sufficient quantities from other foods. Of these, the green, leafy and yellow-colored vegetables, tomatoes, and the citrus fruits are especially valuable.

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Time was when these fresh vegetables were comparatively scarce in winter diets except where winter gardens were possible. But now by the grace of modern distribution methods we get vegetables in the dead of winter from Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. Then gradually, as warmer weather comes, the main producing areas for these vegetables move northward.

Now in February our grocery stores have new cabbage produced in Texas and the gulf states -- celery from California and Florida -- new carrots from Texas and Arizona. Florida is supplying tomatoes, snap beans, and strawberries. And young beets, as well as fresh spinach in February grocery bins, come from Texas.

At this time of year Arizona and California supply the market with lettuce. Imperial Valley in California, a big producing area, is now at the peak of its season. There the weather has been favorable and the crisp green and white lettuce heads are exceptionally large.

Citrus fruits have profited by unusually favorable weather this season. Oranges and grapefruit are abundant on the market. Supplies of oranges are larger than they have been for any other year. Grapefruit is only slightly less plentiful than last season when the crop was the largest on record.

That's a bird's-eye view of the weather situation for fresh fruits and vegetables now. But it's not the whole weather story. For last year's weather played a big part in producing several bumper and near bumper crops. And a number of these crops in storage are now coming out to market as the demand justifies.

Weather was especially kind to the apple crop of 1937. The biggest increase in production took place in central and eastern states where the weather was most favorable. And for the whole nation apple supplies were the largest they had been in more than ten years.





Consequently, apple prices for this season have been low. And last month they reached the lowest point they have been since late October. Shoppers may look forward to large apple supplies for some time to come, for at the beginning of this year the supply of apples in cold storage was the largest for which we have any record.

Last year's pear crop was another one of bumper proportions. And the supply of pears in cold storage at the beginning of this year was considerably larger than last.

Most of the pears in storage now are the winter varieties such as the Nelis and the Anjou. These winter pears have become more popular in recent years since more stores the country over have facilities to store them properly.

All winter pears are picked when green and hard and are kept in storage. A winter pear that has been harvested, stored, and ripened properly is naturally mellow, juicy, and aromatic.

Some of last year's fruits we may now buy in their dried form. The combined supplies of dried raisins, apricots, peaches, and prunes produced in 1937 was substantially above what it has been in other recent years.

Last year California produced an unusually large amount of dried prunes. And the total amount of prunes available for breakfast fruit and desserts this year is the second largest it has ever been.

Popular in winter cakes and puddings are raisins. These too are in the plentiful class now. For the 1937 season raisin production was the largest in the last five years. Also plentiful now are dried apricots and peaches.

No news to shoppers is the bountiful supply of potatoes from last year's crop. Since last June, potato prices have been rather low. And this January there were almost one-fourth more potatoes on hand for market than there were last year at the same time.





This big potato crop is mainly a result of the weather. Growing conditions during 1937 were unusually favorable in most parts of the country. And although less land went into potato production, big yields made the crop a large one.

Dried beans, rice, and sweetpotatoes are also abundant on the market now. And of all three of these crops the weather of 1937 helped to produce a large supply.

There is another way that the weather affects our food supply although we can't estimate the actual influence. That is in the way weather affects our domestic animals.

It's a well known fact that hens do not lay so well during the long cold winters as they do in the shorter, milder ones. And that cows give a less generous supply of milk when they must use more of their energy to keep themselves warm. Egg supplies this winter have been abundant and the prices for eggs have been lower than usual for this time of year.

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## United States Department of Agriculture

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### THE MARKET BASKET

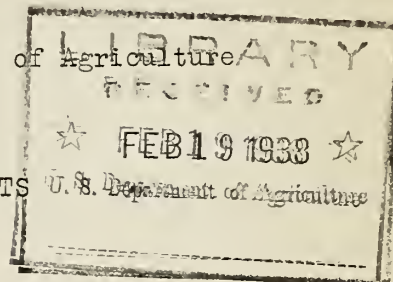
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### USING CANNED VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

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Nicholas Appert is one of the unsung men of science. While his contemporary, Napoleon Bonaparte, was dramatically commanding armies of invasion, Appert was quietly working out a method of food preservation so that those armies could be fed away from home.

But when Nicholas Appert discovered the art of preserving food in airtight containers he benefited the whole world -- not just the French army. For from this beginning has developed the commercial canning industry of today and the practice of canning food at home.

By the modern miracles of food preservation, products of the spring and summer garden are enjoyed in the fall and winter as well. The perishable surplus is saved and a better balanced diet assured the year around.

Fruits and vegetables make up a great percent of the foods preserved by canning. Nutritionally these two foods are valuable chiefly because of their vitamins and minerals. For that reason any adequate diet includes them in considerable amounts.

For instance, a family of four that is getting an adequate diet for a moderate amount of money probably consumes about thirty-five pounds of fruits and vegetables each week -- over and above potatoes.



Of all the vegetables canned commercially the big four are tomatoes, corn, green peas, and snap beans. Others of importance are asparagus, lima beans, beets, spinach, and cabbage as kraut. No census has ever been taken of the foods canned at home, but probably the ranking is somewhat the same.

The supply of commercially packed fruits and vegetables now available is quite a bit larger than it was last year according to reports received in the United States Department of Agriculture.

In preparing canned foods for the table there are three points to remember. One is that the food has already been cooked during the processing in the cans. For that reason the second cooking should be no longer than necessary. Overcooking makes some vegetables mushy and damages flavor.

And the second rule is to use the liquid from the canned products whenever possible -- on the food itself, or condensed and used in sauces and soups. This liquid contains valuable mineral salts and vitamins. So don't drain the juices of canned foods down the sink.

The third point is to vary the seasonings and ways of serving. When vegetables are packed in the can they are generally seasoned only with salt. This leaves the cook free to use her skill in adding that soupcon of onion for which the French are justly famous. Or for putting in that grating of nutmeg or mace so liked in other parts of Europe -- or the dash of curry powder that gives a far Eastern tang.

Take canned corn for instance -- the kind that has had the grain scored and the pulp scraped out. This may be transformed into a delicious pudding by thickening it with eggs, combining with milk, and seasoning it to suit your fancy. The mixture is baked like a custard.

And the other kind of canned corn -- the whole grain type -- may be made into crunchy fritters. For the fritters, use a stiff batter with the juice





drained from the corn as all or part of the liquid. Mix just enough to moisten all ingredients. Then drop it by spoonfuls into deep or shallow fat. Be sure to fry the fritters slowly so that the center is done before the outside gets too brown. Serve them hot.

Tomatoes with their distinctive flavor and high vitamin C content may be flavored with crisp pieces of bacon or onion browned in butter. An ever-popular dish is scalloped tomatoes, at their best when topped with crisp golden brown buttered bread crumbs. It's a good idea, too, to toast the bread before mixing it with the seasoned canned tomatoes.

Canned tomatoes are often used in cream of tomato soup. And the secret of keeping the soup from curdling is to add the tomato sauce slowly to the cold milk, then heat and serve at once.

A tart sauce adds zest to a bland vegetable such as beets. A sweet-sour sauce gives them the Harvard touch, adds piquancy to the flavor, and brings out the bright crimson color. Chopped up pieces of dill pickle mixed in with pieces of beet for a salad do much the same thing.

Asparagus served in timbale molds or turned out on a hot platter and garnished with scarlet pimento adds eye appeal to a dinner. Make a thick sauce of flour, fat, and milk. To this, add chopped asparagus, well-beaten eggs, and seasoning. Pour into timbale molds and put into a pan of hot water. Twenty minutes in a moderate oven will complete this dish.

There are almost endless possibilities for combining canned products with each other and with fresh foods. Cheese adds both flavor and food value to a combination of canned vegetables. An easy cheese dish to prepare is a vegetable scallop. Put any combination of vegetables into a shallow baking dish. These could be snap beans, corn, and any cooked vegetables on hand. Over this pour a





thin white sauce with cheese added. Cover with buttered bread crumbs and bake in a moderate oven until the sauce bubbles and the crumbs are brown.

Another way to combine vegetables is in a salad. Bright red tomato jelly may be the basis for your own selection of crisp diced vegetables such as celery, parsley, cabbage, and a bit of pickle. Add the vegetables just as the gelatin mixture starts to set.

Other/<sup>good</sup>canned vegetable salads are combinations of string beans, peas, and asparagus, combined with a tart sauce. Mix little pieces of crisp salt pork or bacon for crunch.

Sometimes for a whole meal several different kinds of vegetables are served as a plate. One combination for such a plate using canned vegetables almost entirely could be Harvard beets, snap beans with a parsley butter sauce over them, creamed fresh onions, and brown corn fritters.

Canned fruits appear commonly as desserts, cut up in salads, in fruit cups, jellied fruit dishes, and thickened as a sauce for cottage puddings.

An especially attractive dessert made from canned berries is flummery. This is the sweetened juice of blackberries, raspberries, loganberries — any of the berry family with distinctive flavor — thickened with cornstarch, and touched up with lemon juice. After the mixture is cooked in a double boiler, pour it into individual dishes, chill, and serve it with plain or whipped cream.

Broiled halves of apricots and canned peaches are good served with meat or as a dessert. Drain the fruit. Put in a shallow baking dish pit side up. Then pour over a small quantity of melted butter and add just a tiny bit of salt. Broil under a flame or bake in an oven until the fruit is lightly browned.

Sometimes cans of fruit and vegetables become frozen. This will not cause spoilage unless it breaks the seal and lets micro-organisms enter. Sometimes freezing will cause a tin can to bulge without causing leakage. If this happens use these cans of food promptly. But examine all frozen cans of food carefully to be sure they are not leaking before using them. Discard any with off flavors or odors. It doesn't pay to take chances with food that may be spoiled.

